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PTQ8743

RELEASED IN PART
B1, 1.4(B), 1.4(D)

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ACTION INR-00

INFO LOG-00 NP-00 ACQ-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 WHA-00 PERC-00
DS-00 VC-00 TEDE-00 VCE-00 AC-01 NSAE-00 ACE-00
DSCC-00 DRL-02 NFAT-00 SAS-00 /003W
-----D692C4 081640Z /38

R 081601Z AUG 02
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7089
INFO NSC WASHDC
USCINCSO MIAMI FL
AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CARACAS 002317

NSC FOR SALCEDO, AMB. MAISTO
INR FOR FERNANDEZ
USCINCSO ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/07/12

TAGS: PREL, PGOV, VE
SUBJECT: LUNCH WITH THE BOLIVARIAN CIRCLES

CLASSIFIED BY DCM FREDERICK B COOK FOR REASONS 1.5 (B) AND
(D).

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SUMMARY

1. (C) ON AUGUST 5 THE AMBASSADOR HOSTED A LUNCH FOR 12
LEADERS OF THE BOLIVARIAN CIRCLES NETWORK HERE IN CARACAS.

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LUNCH ON THE TERRACE

2. (U) ON AUGUST 5 THE AMBASSADOR HOSTED A LUNCH FOR 12 LEADERS OF THE BOLIVARIAN CIRCLES NETWORK HERE IN CARACAS. THE BOLIVARIANS WERE BROUGHT ALONG BY EL NACIONAL PUBLISHER MIGUEL ENRIQUE OTERO, WHO HAS MADE A PROJECT RECENTLY OF CONTACTING AND EXPLAINING THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CIRCLES. ACCORDING TO IBEYISE PACHECO, EDITOR OF EL NACIONAL'S
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SISTER PUBLICATION ASI ES LA NOTICIA, OTERO HAS BEEN TRYING TO FORESTALL ROWDY PROTESTS AND THE HARASSMENT OF EL NACIONAL EMPLOYEES--THE PAPER IS LOCATED IN A CHAVISTA NEIGHBORHOOD--BY MEETING WITH THE CIRCLES. PACHECO SAID THIS HAS BEEN SOMEWHAT SUCCESSFUL; SOME OF THE CIRCLE LEADERS NOW EVEN WARN OTERO WHEN THEIR UNRULY FOLLOWERS ARE ON THEIR WAY. (DURING OUR LUNCH, ONE OF THE LEADERS KIDDED OTERO ABOUT BOTH THEIR FATHERS BEING IN THE COMMUNIST PARTY TOGETHER.)

4. (U) THE ORGANIZERS CLAIMED TO HAVE 73,000 CIRCLES NATIONWIDE WITH APPROXIMATELY 10 MEMBERS EACH. CONTRADICTING THEMSELVES SOMEWHAT, THEY THEN CLAIMED SOME 2 MILLION VENEZUELANAS ARE CURRENTLY ON THEIR ROLES, AT THE SAME TIME ADMITTING THAT A GOOD REGISTRATION SYSTEM HAS YET TO BE DEVELOPED. THEY EXPLAINED THAT ANYONE CAN FORM A CIRCLE, AND SAID THAT THE REGISTRATION FORM IS SENT TO MIRAFLORES.

NOT CHAVISTAS-BOLIVARIANS!

5. (U) ALL THOSE IN ATTENDANCE RIDICULED THE NOTION THAT

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THE BOLIVARIAN CIRCLES ARE ASSOCIATED IN ANYWAY WITH
PROMOTING PARAMILITARY GROUPS OR VIOLENCE. ("UNA INFAMIA"
AS ONE LEADER, EDUARDO JONES MONDARAIN, PUT IT.) WHILE
DENYING THAT THE CIRCLES HAVE ANY SPECIFIC POLITICAL
ALIGNMENT--DESPITE THE FACT THIS PROGRAM WAS AN INITIATIVE
OF PRESIDENT CHAVEZ--THEY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE DIRECTION
FOR THEIR ORGANIZATION COMES FROM THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE
OF MIRAFLORES. (ONE OF THEIR PRESS PEOPLE, WHO WAITED
OUTSIDE, ADMITTED BEING SENT FROM THE INTERIOR AND JUSTICE
MINISTRY. ANOTHER MEMBER OF THEIR LEADERSHIP, OSWALDO
CANSINO, IS THE LAWYER FOR THE STREETFIGHTING CIRCLE LEADER
LINA RON.) REINA SEQUERA, A FORMER CTV PRESIDENTIAL
CANDIDATE, DID MENTION HOWEVER THAT ORGANIZING THE CIRCLES
ALSO HAD AN OBJECTIVE FOR PREPARING FOR ANY REFERENDUM THAT
MIGHT COME UP IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

6. (U) RODRIGO CHAVEZ CLAIMED THE GROUPS HAVE NOT RECEIVED
ANY GOVERNMENT MONEY BECAUSE THEY SO FAR LACK LEGAL STATUS,
ALTHOUGH PRESIDENT CHAVEZ (NO RELATION, WE THINK) DID
PLEDGE SOME 140 MILLION BOLIVARES TO THE CIRCLES IN A
RECENT "ALO PRESIDENTE." PERHAPS THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE LUNCH
WAS WHEN CHAVEZ EXPLAINED, BEFORE A CLEARLY BEMUSED OTERO,
HOW THE OPPOSITION ITSELF HAD ORGANIZED THE MURDERS OF

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ACTION INR-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	INL-00	DODE-00	WHA-00
	DS-00	VC-00	TEDE-00	LAB-01	VCE-00	AC-01	NSAE-00
	ACE-00	DSCC-00	DRL-02	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/004W	
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 CARACAS 002317

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OPPOSITION MARCHERS ON APRIL 11 IN ORDER TO GIVE A PRETEXT
FOR A MILITARY COUP AGAINST PRESIDENT CHAVEZ. ALTHOUGH
MOST OF THE SPEAKERS HEWED CLOSELY TO THE PARTY LINE, WHEN
SEQUERA LET SLIP THAT CORRUPTION WAS NOW "WORSE THAN

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EVER,"--WHICH SHE ATTRIBUTED IN PART TO A BUREAUCRACY MADE
UP OF FOURTH REPUBLIC HOLDOVERS--THIS WAS MET WITH SOME
STERN GLANCES FROM OTHER LEADERS SEATED NEARBY.

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